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LETTER DATED 16 JANUARY 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement issued on 15 January 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union on the occasion of the conclusion of the mandate of the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) John WESTON
Permanent Representative of the
United Kingdom of Great Britain
and Northern Ireland
to the United Nations

Annex

Statement by the Presidency of the European Union on the occasion of the conclusion of the mandate of the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium on 15 January 1998

On the occasion of the conclusion of the mandate of the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES), the European Union wishes to pay tribute to the work of the Administration, to the past and present Administrators and to successive force commanders for their achievements. The Union also expresses its appreciation for the contributions made by both the Government of Croatia and the local community to the peaceful reintegration of the region. The Union is pleased to have been able to contribute substantially to this goal.

The European Union will continue to follow carefully events in Eastern Slavonia and in Croatia as a whole, bearing in mind their importance for the future development of political and economic relations between the Union and Croatia. The Union calls on the Government, at the national and local levels, to ensure the right of refugees and displaced persons to return, respect for the rule of law, the equitable treatment of all citizens regardless of ethnic origin and the protection of minorities. It must make an unswerving commitment to the reintegration process. The Union welcomes the readiness of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to assist Croatia in meeting these and other obligations.

There is now an important opportunity to show that different communities can live together in peace and in mutual respect. This is an integral part of the idea of democratic Europe. The European Union calls on all Croatian citizens, Serbs and Croats alike, in Eastern Slavonia and throughout Croatia, to see the conclusion of the UNTAES mandate as marking a new era of cooperation between them.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated country Cyprus, and Iceland and Liechtenstein align themselves with this statement.